

# Health Care Fund Community Grant Program



**Legislation Achieves Results  
in 2001-2002**

The Community Grant Program continues to invest in local, community-driven initiatives that develop innovative approaches and solutions to improve the health of New Hampshire's citizens. During the past two years, the Community Grant Program has supported 49 initiatives addressing New Hampshire's most critical health needs. Initiatives were developed to: improve access to prescription medicines for at-risk populations; address direct care workforce shortages; strengthen primary care services for the medically underserved; and expand the accessibility of quality after school programs specifically targeting high-risk youth.



During budget years 2002 and 2003, the Community Grant Program awarded \$4 million to grant recipients. These Community Grant Program funds enabled communities to match and leverage funding from a variety of public and private sources to expand and enhance services and ensure these services are sustainable. During the past two years, the 49 projects secured more than \$23 million in matched and leveraged funds – nearly 6 times more funding than the Community Grant Program provided.

## Health Care Fund Community Grant Program

### *\$23M Leveraged for New Hampshire Communities*

Round	Budget Year (SFY)	Amount Requested	Number of Applicants	Total Amount Granted	Annual Grant Awards	Matched & Leveraged Funds
6	2002	\$5.3 M	87	\$2.4 M	48	\$19 M
7	2003	\$1.7 M	35	\$1.6 M	34	\$ 4 M*
Totals		\$7.0 M	122	\$4.0 M	82	\$23 M

\* Estimated by grantees – Program Year ends June 30, 2003.

# NH Poor and Elderly Saved \$15 M in Prescription Drug Costs

The rising costs of prescriptions, increased use of drug therapies, the development of new drug therapies, increasing costs of insurance pharmacy benefits, and the lack of a Medicare pharmacy benefit have limited access to prescription medicines. An estimated 306,397 New Hampshire residents lack pharmacy insurance benefits. At risk individuals – elders, persons with low incomes, chronic conditions, or mental illness – are among those most adversely affected. The Community Grant Program funds five, community-based initiatives that improve client access to prescription medicines by maximizing the use of samples, indigent drug programs sponsored by pharmaceutical companies, charity care, and discount pricing programs.

## Pharmacy Assistance Programs

### *The Community Grant*

*Program's pharmacy assistance programs – Ammonoosuc Community Health Services, Avis Goodwin Community Health Center, the Foundation for Healthy Communities,*

*Riverbend Community Mental Health, Inc., and Weeks Medical*

*Center – served over 29,800 patients, filled more than 99,200 prescriptions, with an estimated market value savings for residents of more than \$14,594,000.*



## The Foundation for Healthy Communities

***The Foundation for Healthy Communities*** created the Medication Bridge Program to enable low-income, eligible patients of all ages to receive free prescription medications, to make better use of existing programs offered by pharmaceutical companies, and to increase the number of sites statewide that are able to offer these services. Serving as a needed resource for health care providers, a manual highlighting best practices, and a software program for tracking patients, medications, and pharmaceutical companies was developed. As a direct result of this initiative, there are currently 43 Medication Bridge Prescription Assistance Sites throughout New Hampshire. To measure community impact, Medication Bridge Program sites are asked to report certain participant and prescription information. During program year 2002, 21 of the 43 programs reported that 60,580 prescriptions were filled. The market value savings for patients was conservatively estimated to be more than \$10.7 million.

## Ammonoosuc Community Health Services

***Ammonoosuc Community Health Services***, a network of four primary care health centers serving Northern New Hampshire towns, created one of the state's first pharmacy assistance programs in 1997. Ammonoosuc Community Health Services received funding to improve and expand these pharmacy services. In collaboration with the New Hampshire Board of Pharmacy, Ammonoosuc Community Health Services initiated a pilot program utilizing telepharmacy technology to expand pharmacy services to its most rural health center in Warren, which is over 20 miles from the nearest pharmacy. The agency will be the first in New Hampshire to use this technology to expand pharmacy services to patients in rural, isolated communities, serving as a model for other underserved areas in the state. In 2002, Ammonoosuc Community Health Services' prescription assistance program served over 1,650 clients, filled over 2,700 prescriptions, with an estimated market value savings of \$206,400.

# Solutions to New Hampshire's Workforce Shortages

In New Hampshire, as is the case nationally, the availability, recruitment, and retention of direct service and support workers who provide care to children, adults, and elders is an area of great concern. According to research funded by the Community Grant Program, and conducted by the Foundation for Healthy Communities, 70% of New Hampshire's nurses are over age 40, and 43% of all nurses might leave the profession in the next 5 to 10 years. While the demand for services increase, particularly among our aging population, nursing education statistics indicate that graduates of New Hampshire practical nursing programs declined 41% between 1996 and 2000. Similar trends are occurring among other health and human service professional and paraprofessional careers. To ensure New Hampshire has a sufficient pool of qualified, direct service staff, the Department chose workforce development as a Community Grant Program priority. During the first year of Community Grant Program support, ten programs created effective models that address New Hampshire's critical shortage of direct care workers.

## The Manchester School to Career Partnership

*The Manchester School to Career Partnership*, a coalition of employers, educators, labor and community-based organizations, developed a project to increase the number of students entering caregiving professional and paraprofessional occupations. In its first year of operation, the project has involved over 2,255 middle school students in a variety of activities including job shadowing opportunities, a health care career fair, and career days. The project also developed a two-week nursing camp that engaged 26 middle school students to learn more about the profession and gain hands-on experience. Because New Hampshire's first nursing camp was so successful, agencies throughout New Hampshire are planning to replicate this model.



*Nursing Camp provided students with firsthand experience and valuable insight into nursing as a career.*

## The New Hampshire Community Loan

*The New Hampshire Community Loan Fund* project is improving the working environment of direct care staff at five New Hampshire nursing homes – Integrated Health Services in Dover, the Edgewood Center and the Mark Wentworth Home in Portsmouth, Golden View Health Care Center in Meredith, and Westwood Harborside in Keene – to increase retention rates. Participating homes are receiving support to initiate innovative practices that will improve the caregiving and workplace atmosphere in sustainable ways. The project began by identifying the key factors impacting the retention of direct care workers – low wages, the physically and emotionally challenging work, and, above all, workers' frustration with their treatment and the workplace environment. To address these concerns, skill training for supervisors is being offered, new employee orientation programs are being designed, peer mentoring is being implemented, and teamwork and problem solving among staff is being encouraged. Statewide symposiums will enable the five demonstration sites to share results, and the impact of this initiative, with the nursing home industry.

# Managing Rising Costs: Strengthening Primary Care Services

Studies show that access to routine primary care services improve health and can decrease utilization of more expensive inpatient and emergency room services, not only by providing care in the most appropriate setting, but also by providing case management. Community health centers provide a critical safety net for many of New Hampshire's 90,000 uninsured citizens and have helped to control rising health care costs related to delayed care or care in more expensive settings.

## The Manchester Community Health Center

*The Manchester Community Health Center* established the Bilingual Case Management Project to improve primary care services for its Spanish-speaking clients. The Bilingual Case Manager provides medical interpretation, coordinates referrals, participates in provider case conferences, and assists the agency in the development of culturally appropriate services and distribution materials. The creation of these “wrap around services” allows the health center to more effectively address multifaceted health problems and increase patient and treatment plan compliance. This project serves as a model for ensuring that linguistic ability and ethnicity are not barriers to quality health care services.

## The Community Health Access Network

*The Community Health Access Network* (CHAN) is a network of community-based primary health care safety-net providers. Its members include Avis Goodwin Community Health Center, Families First of the Greater Seacoast, Health First Family Care Center, the Manchester Community Health Center, and Lamprey Health Care. CHAN developed and implemented a Disease Management Program focusing on diabetes and asthma. The Program offers a series of office-based educational services that engage health center clients as active participants in managing the effects of their chronic health conditions. For many clients, participation in the Program's group assessment and informational activities provides the needed peer support from others facing similar health conditions to better adhere to care protocols, resulting in improved health status.

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# Positive Options for Adolescents

More than 30,000 New Hampshire children between the ages of 7 and 16 spend some portion of each school day unsupervised by an adult. Studies show that such children are more at risk for poor school performance, engaging in juvenile crime, sexual behavior, violence, and alcohol and drug use. Throughout the country, communities that have after school programs are experiencing impressive results: teenage alcohol and drug usage is declining; juvenile crime rates are being reduced; and school attendance and performance is improving.

## The Northern Strafford County Juvenile Court Diversion Program

***The Northern Strafford County Juvenile Court Diversion Program*** offers an alternative to adjudication for at-risk and delinquent youth in Northern Strafford County. Youth are referred to the program from the Rochester and Somersworth District Courts, police departments, schools, and parents. The Program supports a variety of programming including drug and alcohol prevention, conflict resolution, and other life skills training that provide youth with the opportunity to make better choices, and to learn to be accountable for criminal, violent, or risky behaviors. Participants, supervised by volunteers, perform community service at a variety of local businesses and organizations. According to 2001 data obtained through the Rochester District Court one year after youth participation, 73% of juveniles who participated in the program in 2000 did not commit new crimes. In 2000 and 2001, program participants paid victims \$1,050 in restitution and performed over 925 hours of community service.

## Claremont School District

***Claremont School District*** created the Eagle's Nest, an after school and enrichment program for middle school students. The program operates Monday through Friday offering a variety of activities, including homework assistance, crafts, clubs and summer programming. Late-afternoon transportation is also provided. The visibility and success of the Eagle's Nest Program allowed the grantee to apply for and receive over \$1.5 million of funding through the federal 21<sup>st</sup> Century Program, leveraging resources to replicate the program in each of Claremont's five schools.

*Fifteen agencies receive grants from the Community Grant Program to expand and develop accessible, high quality programs for after school hours. Communities across the state have designed a broad array of initiatives that address the local needs of children and their families. These models include school-based after school programs, juvenile court diversion for at-risk youth, teen centers, and out of school suspension alternative programs. During the first two years of operation, these initiatives have served over 11,000 children.*

